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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

17 February 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: The Outlook for the Dominican Republic

1. The latest formal estimate (SNIE 80/1-59, 29 December 1959, paras. 7, 53-60) recognizes that the thirty-year Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic is faced with mounting difficulties, but concludes that it will probably remain in power through 1960.

2. There appears to be little potentiality for a Castro-type revolution in the Dominican Republic. Castro-inspired invasion attempts last June were decisively defeated. The peasantry and the military appear to be generally loyal to the regime. The military and the propertied classes have been repelled by the excesses of the Castro revolution in Cuba. However, the unremitting propaganda pressure from Cuba and Venezuela has apparently stimulated among the Dominican propertied and professional classes expectation of and desire for political change -- perhaps also a sense that such a change must soon be accomplished by internal action in order to forestall a change brought about by more radical forces from the outside.

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3. Recent wholesale arrests involving members of almost every prominent Dominican family as well as members of the Catholic clergy reveal Trujillo's distrust of this element in society and the possible existence of a very extensive revolutionary conspiracy. Although these arrests may have a temporary preventive effect, the brutalities which accompanied them and the severe sentences which have been meted out will render the regime the more intolerable to the leading elements of the community. These arrests have also incurred the condemnation of the Catholic Church. Moreover, the Venezuelan initiative in the OAS regarding the violation of human rights in the Dominican Republic has served to demonstrate the general lack of sympathy for the Trujillo regime in Latin America.

4. In view of these developments, we now regard the stability of the Trujillo regime as having become precarious. Although it manifestly holds the upper hand at present, we believe that the chances of its lasting through 1960 have diminished since December. However, we cannot predict the time or the circumstances in which it would be likely to be overthrown. For the present, the internal opposition is disorganized and leaderless; much of the external opposition is discredited by association with Castro and with

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Communism. The issue is likely to turn upon psychological developments rather than upon the present alignment of forces. The fall of the regime will be increasingly anticipated. When there comes to be a general sense that its days are numbered, there will be a rush for the bandwagon and the situation will probably develop very rapidly.

5. Any immediate successor to the present regime will probably be predominantly military in character, with upper and middle class support. It would be concerned to prevent a development of the situation along the line of the Castro revolution in Cuba. It might, however, have little credit among the peasantry, whose antagonism might open the way for a Castro-inspired intervention by revolutionary groups of exiles.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES: /



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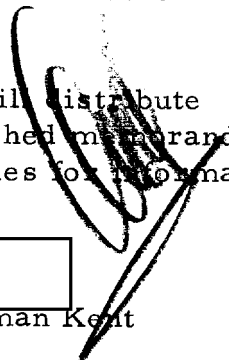

SHERMAN KENT
Chairman

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE DIRECTOR

If you approve, we will distribute
copies of the attached memorandum
to the USIB agencies for informa-
tion.



Sherman Kent

17 February 1960
(DATE)

FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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